

## John Charles Olmsted and the Seattle Park System – Southeast Quadrant Bike Map



This complete loop is 17 miles long. For those wishing a shorter route, you may want to ride along Lake Washington Boulevard from Madrona Park to Seward Park and back. A paved path parallels most of this 10-mile route.



In 1903, landscape architect John Charles Olmsted proposed a 20-mile-long series of parks and parkways that stretched across Seattle from Seward Park to modern day Discovery Park. This linkage of green spaces is considered by many to be one of the finest stretches of city parks in the country. Fortunately for modern visitors and residents, you can follow most of Olmsted's spectacular route by bike. This route map features the Olmsted parks in the southeast part of Seattle.

### Numbers Below Correspond to Numbers on Map

1. Leschi Park originally marked the end of the trolley that ran from downtown up Yesler Avenue to the lake. The city purchased the property from the developer, the Seattle Electric Company, to include in the Olmsted plan.
2. Seattle businessman John Frink and his wife donated this property to the city in 1906. Recent work by volunteer groups, led by Friends of Frink Park, have restored trails, removed invasives, and rehabilitated the park's waterfall.
3. Colman Park, the site of the original pumping station for Seattle drinking water, became park property in 1907. Many landscape architects consider it to be the finest example of Olmsted design in the city, with its winding road, trails that separate pedestrians and vehicles, and natural vegetation.
4. Stanley Sayres Memorial Park honors the early hydro-plane promoter. Prior to the lowering of the lake in 1916, this area was a marsh with a wooden trestle crossing the water. A hump in the trestle allowed boats to travel to Columbia City.
5. Park superintendent E.O. Schwagerl recommended the addition of this property, then known as Bailey Peninsula, to the Seattle park system in 1892. The city acquired the land in 1911, only after the Olmsted Brothers included it in their plan. Seward contains some of the last remaining acres of old growth forest within city limits.
6. The city started acquiring land in what is known as the East Duwamish Greenbelt in the 1990s. More property will be bought with funds from the 2000 ProParks levy, including the wooded hills above Interstate 5.
7. The Olmsted Brothers designed Jefferson Park and Golf Course, which opened in 1915. Plans call for covering the reservoir with either a soft or hard lid. The 1903 Olmsted plan called for a parkway to run off the east side of Beacon Hill to Lake Washington Boulevard. The present Cheasty Boulevard only partially realizes this design. The bike route more or less follows the 1903 Olmsted vision.

### For more information on biking and Olmsted in Seattle:

City of Seattle Bike Maps

[www.cityofseattle.net/transportation/bikemaps.htm](http://www.cityofseattle.net/transportation/bikemaps.htm)

Bicycle Alliance - 224-9252

[www.bicyclealliance.org](http://www.bicyclealliance.org)

Cascade Bicycle Club - 522-3222

[www.cascade.org/](http://www.cascade.org/)

Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks

[www.seattle.gov/friendsofolmstedparks/](http://www.seattle.gov/friendsofolmstedparks/)

Seattle City Parks - 684-4075

[www.cityofseattle.net/parks](http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks)

